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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Drivers Urged to Use Caution on Delaware Roads

Dover - In anticipation of the wintery conditions predicted for Delaware over the next 24 – 48 hours, Office of Highway Safety officials are urging drivers to use caution and common sense during morning and evening commutes as well as with any travel they may have to do starting tonight and continuing through Wednesday morning. “Given the number of fatal crashes which have already occurred since January 1st, we are particularly concerned about the potential for serious injury and loss of life in poor driving conditions,” said Andrea Summers, Community Relations Officer for the Delaware Office of Highway Safety.

OHS is offering the following tips from the National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA) to make everyone’s journey to and from work safe:

- ❑ Drive slowly. Travel at or below the posted speed limit because it’s harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface. You may also not be able to see patches of ice until you are on top of them.
- ❑ Leave plenty of space between you and the car in front of you. If you're too close to the car in front of you, you will not have enough time to react if that person loses control of his vehicle.
- ❑ Turn on your headlights. This isn’t so you can see the road better, it’s so other drivers can see you. It’s also Delaware law to use headlights in conditions of poor visibility. Using low beams will provide better visibility than using high-beams.
- ❑ Apply your brakes carefully, especially on hilly roads and exit/entrance ramps. When applying brakes on hills or ramps, you need more stopping distance. Snowy roads make it easier for cars to slide.

- ❑ Realize that bridges, areas under them and overpasses freeze faster than other road surfaces. There may be patches of ice that you cannot see until you hit them.
- ❑ Know your car. An SUV, with its higher center of gravity, handles differently than a four door passenger car especially on wet and icy roads. SUV owners should not intimidate smaller vehicles by trying to force them to go faster than the driver is comfortable with. And SUV owners should realize that having a bigger vehicle does not automatically mean you can go the speed limit or faster than the speed limit.
- ❑ Pay extra attention when approaching intersections. Watch for cars that don't have the right of way, because even though you are taking all necessary precautions, other drivers may not be and you need enough reaction time if they run a stop sign or stop light.
- ❑ Wear your seatbelt. If you are involved in a wreck your seatbelt will help you keep control of the vehicle and improve your chances of escaping serious injury or death by nearly 50%.
- ❑ If your vehicle starts to skid, don't panic and don't hit the brakes hard. Instead stay calm and ease your foot off the gas while carefully steering in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. This procedure, known as "steering into the skid," will bring the back end of your car in line with the front.

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